

## A Service of Vespers

### **Also called Evening Prayer**

Words to be said are in this style: **All:** say these words.

*Instructions are in italics.*

*This service can be used on Sunday evenings, if a sub-deacon, Deacon or Priest is present, otherwise Compline is to be preferred. Participants should be encouraged to share in this service by giving readings, leading prayers or sharing testimony which can be inserted at any suitable point. The Hymns should be relevant and easy to sing unaccompanied. The hymns can be spoken if preferred. The candles on the altar should be lit and used at other safe and suitable places in the church (tea lights in holders are ideal).*

### **Introit**

**Sub-deacon:** In the name of the Most High God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**All:** Amen.

**Sub-deacon:** O Lord, in your mercy save us.

**All:** O Lord, make haste to help us.

**Sub-deacon:** Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and evermore shall be, world without end.

**All:** Amen.

Hymn A suitable hymn may be sung

### **The Psalms**

*One or more of the following Psalms are said or intoned. Other suitable Psalms may be used instead. It is to be preferred that members of the congregation share in reciting or intoning the Psalms if possible. The Psalms are best read from a modern service book which has simplified Psalms for antiphonal reciting, or a modern Bible can be used instead.*

#### **Psalm 48**

1 Great is the Lord, and worthy to be praised, in the city of our God, his holy mountain.

2 Beautiful in its loftiness, the joy of the whole earth, like the heights of Zaphon is Mount Zion, the city of the Great King.

3 God is in her citadels; he has shown himself to be her fortress.

4 When the kings joined forces, when they advanced together,

5 they saw her and were astounded; they fled in terror.

6 Trembling seized them there, pain like that of a woman in labour.

7 You destroyed them like ships of Tarshish shattered by an east wind.

8 As we have heard, so we have seen in the city of the Lord Almighty, in the city of our God: God makes her secure forever.

9 Within your temple, O God, we meditate on your unfailing love.

10 Like your name, O God, your praise reaches to the ends of the earth; your right hand is filled with righteousness.

11 Mount Zion rejoices, the villages of Judah are glad because of your judgments.

12 Walk about Zion, go around her, count her towers,

13 consider well her ramparts, view her citadels, that you may tell of them to the next generation.

14 For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even to the end.

**Sub-deacon:** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

**All:** Amen.

### **Psalm 91**

1 Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

2 I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

3 Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence.

4 He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.

5 You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day,

6 nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday.

7 A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand at your right hand, but it will not come near you.

8 You will only observe with your eyes and see the punishment of the wicked.

9 If you say, "The Lord is my refuge," and you make the Most High your dwelling,

10 no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent.

11 For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways;

12 they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.

13 You will tread on the lion and the cobra; you will trample the great lion and the serpent.

14 "Because he loves me," says the Lord, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name.

15 He will call on me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him.

16 With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation."

**Sub-deacon:** Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

**All:** Amen.

**Sub-deacon:** Build up treasure for yourselves in heaven, says the Lord.

## ***The Song of the Redeemed***

**Reader (or All):** Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive glory and honour. You are worthy, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honour and power; for you made all things, and it is by your will that they exist and were created.

You are worthy, Lord, to receive the book and open its seals, for you were killed, and with your blood you have ransomed people from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them rulers and priests for God; and they will rule over the earth.

The Lamb is worthy, who was killed, to receive power and riches and wisdom, strength and honour, glory and blessing.

**Sub-deacon:** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

**All:** Amen.

**Sub-deacon:** Worthy is the Lamb that was slain

*Hymn a suitable hymn may be sung*

## ***The Reading***

*This, or another suitable passage of scripture is read.*

**Sub-deacon:** a reading from the first chapter of the Gospel of John

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

30 This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.'

31 I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel."

32 Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him.

33 And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'

34 I have seen and I testify that this is God's Chosen One."

## ***Antiphon***

**Sub-deacon:** You give me the fullness of joy in your presence, O Lord.

**All:** You give me the fullness of joy in your presence, O Lord.

**Sub-deacon:** I will find happiness at your right hand for ever.

**All:** You give me the fullness of joy in your presence, O Lord.

**Sub-deacon:** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

**All:** You will give me the fullness of joy in your presence for ever, O Lord.

## ***The Magnificat***

My soul rejoices in the Lord

Do great things for us, O Lord, for you are mighty, and Holy is your name.

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,  
and my spirit rejoices in God, my salvation.

For he has shown me such favour –  
me, his lowly handmaiden.

Now all generations will call me blessed,  
because the mighty one has done great things for me.

His name is holy,  
his mercy lasts for generation after generation  
for those who revere him.

He has put forth his strength:  
he has scattered the proud and conceited,  
torn princes from their thrones;  
but lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things;  
the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel,  
he has remembered his mercy as he promised to our fathers,  
to Abraham and his children for ever.

**Sub-deacon:** Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit,  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

**All:** Amen.

**Sub-deacon:** Do great things for us, O Lord, for you are mighty, and Holy is your name.

## ***Prayers of Intercession***

**Sub-deacon:** Christ is the shepherd of his flock: he loves and cares for us, his people.  
We turn to him in trust and say:

**All:** Lord, we need your care.

**Sub-deacon:** Christ our Lord, you are pastor of all the ages, protect our Bishop, N.,  
and all the pastors of your Church.

**All:** Lord, we need your care.

**Sub-deacon:** Be with those who are persecuted for their faith, and those cut off from  
the support of the Church: Good Shepherd, in their pain and isolation may they know  
your care.

**All:** Lord, we need your care.

**Sub-deacon:** Bring healing to the sick; give nourishment to the hungry.

**All:** Lord, we need your care.

**Sub-deacon:** We remember those who make our laws and those who apply them:  
Lord, give them wisdom and discernment.

**All:** Lord, we need your care.

**Sub-deacon:** Gather the flock for which you laid down your life: bring home to their  
Father's house all who have died in your peace.

**All:** Lord, we need your care.

**Sub-deacon:** Our Father, who art in heaven....

**All:** hallowed be Your name.

Your kingdom come.

Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us,

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For Yours is the Kingdom.

The Power and the Glory

For ever and ever

Amen.

**Sub-deacon:** Yours is the day and yours is the night, Lord God:

let the Sun of Justice shine so steadily in our hearts that we may come at length to that  
light where you dwell eternally.

**Sub-deacon:** Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

**All:** Amen.

*A Hymn may be sung*

## ***Final Prayers***

*The sub-deacon says closing prayers followed by:*

**Sub-deacon:** The Lord bless us this night, keep us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

**All:** Amen.

*The candles on the altar are extinguished*

**END of service**

*Please pray for yourselves and the Old Catholic Apostolic Church regularly.*